



Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: June 12, 2019

Time: 7:15 PM

Location: Town Hall Annex, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Members in Attendance: Daniel Amstutz, Wayne Chouinard, Lenard Diggins,
Charles Giroux, Howard Muise

Members Missing: Brian Kmetz, Corey Rateau, Michael Gordon, Melissa Laube,
Jeffrey Maxtutis, Scott Smith

Public Members: Laura Jarbeax, Lauren Boyle, Paul Schlichtman, Emily Lopes, Chris
Demao, Brian Ristuccia, Carol Luddeke

Howard Muise called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

A quorum was not reached for the meeting. Only public comments and discussion items could be addressed at this meeting.

Public Comments:

Paul Schlichtman, who lives at 47 Mystic Street (Mystic Tower Condominiums), said he had sent a request to the Select Board to look at issues of egress from Chestnut Terrace onto Chestnut Street. Due to traffic congestion on Chestnut Street and the proximity of the traffic signal at Chestnut and Mystic, residents frequently have difficulty entering and exiting Chestnut Terrace to access their property. Chestnut Terrace also provides access to Chestnut Manor, an Arlington Housing Authority property for elderly/disabled residents. The request is for a Do Not Block Intersection sign on Chestnut Street to direct drivers to not stop in front of Chestnut Terrace. The petition was sent to the Select Board in April and he has not heard back about next steps. Muise noted that he had not seen the petition yet and would need to follow up on where the Select Board directed it to. TAC members noted pavement markings may be more effective than just a sign in this situation.

Laura Jarbeau and Emily Lopes of Jason Street noted they are concerned about speeds and traffic volumes on Jason Street between Irving Street and Mass Ave. There is a school bus stop at the corner of Jason & Irving for students to be bussed to Bishop Elementary School. The street is narrow, there are many children living there, and there is low yielding compliance by drivers at crosswalks. Jarbeau met with Daniel Amstutz a few months ago in the morning to do some observations and talk about what actions could be taken. She has seen the presentation and report TAC did on Jason Street in

2014 but is asking for more focus on the section closer to Mass Ave. Based on the speed data collected for that report it appears that there is a speed problem at Jason and Irving in the 20 mph zone. Amstutz noted that he asked Jarbeau to come to a TAC meeting to make her case since TAC has looked at volume and speed issues on Jason Street on multiple occasions and there is a history there. Muise said TAC will reopen a study for Jason Street and also follow up about previous recommendations to look at traffic calming by Menotomy Rocks Park and Woodland Street.

Several community members attended the meeting to discuss traffic and safety issues at Park Avenue and Appleton Street. Issues include pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and recent vehicle crashes. There is no traffic control at Park Ave and Appleton. It has been worse as of late because of traffic using Appleton Street going eastbound trying to cross or turn left onto Park Ave during rush hour. Drivers must navigate fast moving traffic on Park and find gaps in traffic to cross or turn left, often with little room to spare. It was also noted that the Police Department has recorded more than a dozen crashes at this location in the last 18 months. Brian Ristuccia, of 73 Rhinecliff Street, noted parents do not let their children walk across this intersection because they do not consider it safe and feel safer driving them to Dallin or Ottoson. Park Ave is a barrier to walking for children and others. Muise noted that TAC has planned to do traffic counts this spring, but due to budgetary reasons cannot do them until after July 1. However, a count would be best done in the fall when school is back in session. A traffic signal is a possible long-term solution for the intersection, but it costs money and specific warrants must be met for MassDOT to approve its installation. The residents appreciated that TAC is looking at long-term solutions for the intersection, but asked if short-term interventions could be considered. Suggestions included restricting left turns, diverting traffic to Florence Street and the signal at Florence and Park, installing pedestrian crossing flags, putting in a crossing guard for students, and doing a temporary curb extension. Muise noted the crossing guard question should be brought up with the School Committee. Wayne Chouinard said staff from Planning, Public Works, and the Police Department will review the intersection to see what short term interventions may be possible.

Town Issues/Activities:

Chouinard reviewed his update memo to TAC, including new signal cabinet equipment to be installed at the signal at Mystic & Chestnut, potential APS buttons and countdown timers at the High School crosswalk, and a potential RRFB at Gray St and Quincy St. He also initiated a discussion about how DPW uses its annual street and sidewalk funding allocations. They are putting a lot of money towards curbing, sidewalks, and ramps, and about the same amount for paving work, but they often get pressure to do more paving work. Despite this, the pavement condition index of the town has increased (improved). Members of TAC noted their agreement with the way DPW has been focusing these resources.

Transportation Advisory Committee Members:

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Web site: www.arlingtonma.gov/tac

Amstutz noted there is a public information session at Stratton Elementary tomorrow, June 13, to discuss the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant Project. In a couple of weeks town staff will meet with MassDOT and AECOM to scope out more detail about the project. The town is working with MassDOT to have a bicycle and pedestrian counter installed on the Minuteman Bikeway by Swan Place. It should be installed in the coming weeks. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Administrator is going to start work on the Consolidated Plan for CDBG that is required by HUD. Amstutz asked for feedback from the community on the public infrastructure portion of the Plan. TAC members noted a continuing need for curb ramps, as well as suggested needs for bus shelters and accessibility to bus stops.

Vote: Election of Officers: *This item was deferred to the next meeting due a lack of a quorum.*

Discussion: Vacation Plans: Muise said either the July or August meeting will be canceled for the summer. He will email TAC members to see if there will be enough members for a quorum at the July meeting.

Update: Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan: Amstutz explained that the Town Manager will discuss the Transportation Plan with the Select Board at their next meeting on June 17. Annual Town Meeting approved funding for a plan, which will develop a vision for what the Arlington transportation system should look like in 20 years and identify action steps to get there. An RFP will be developed over the next couple of months to hire a consultant to help write the plan. A Plan Advisory Committee will be created which will include members from town committees, town departments, advocacy groups, and residents. There will be a representative from the TAC on the new committee. Chuck Giroux and Len Diggins both expressed interest in participating on the committee, once it is formed.

Update: BRT Permanent Implementation: Amstutz noted the final version of the sign and pavement marking plan for the bus lane were circulated to TAC. It took several weeks of discussion with the MBTA to come to the final design, which includes a significant amount of red pavement markings. The MBTA will be reimbursing the Town for the pavement marking costs. DPCH is working with DPW on getting the pavement marking work advertised for contractors. It will still be several weeks before the lane will be installed.

Update: Appleton St/Park Ave: Muise noted this issue was discussed at length during the public comments of the meeting.

Update: Park Ave: Chouinard said he would like to defer this conversation until a later TAC meeting.

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Update: Crosswalk on Summer Street at Victoria Road/Buzzell Field: The Select Board approved the parking restrictions recommended by TAC at their June 3 meeting. APD and DPW will work to get the signs ordered and installed.

Discussion: Crosswalk on Grove Street: Muise noted that the traffic counts for Grove Street from the Arlington High School Traffic Impact Analysis are being reviewed to help inform this request. It will be discussed in more detail at the next TAC meeting.

Update: Parking and Traffic Direction on Bartlett Ave.: Muise noted that Corey Rateau needs to take the lead on addressing this request. More discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

Discussion: Traffic Volume and Speed Criteria: Amstutz noted he has continued to do research on this subject but other work has taken precedent.

Update: Crosswalk on Academy at Maple: TAC will revisit once Rateau conducts counts at the location.

Discussion: Traffic Calming on Kensington Park: Muise noted Rateau has sent information here which does not appear to show a speed problem. However, more discussion will be deferred to the next meeting.

Howard Muise adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

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